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say everything that has been dearest to the core of his heart during all his life.

The Cardinal was tried in the company of men deemed to have been his accomplices in a great conspiracy against the government. All pleaded guilty. Witnesses to the trial beheld a spectacle oddly reminiscent of the Reichstag Fire trials in Berlin during 1933, with the sinister difference that then even Göring could not intimidate the Court. Béla Fabian has pointed out the curious fact that those who conducted the trial of the Cardinal were former Nazis. The President, Dr. Vilmos Olti, had served the Hungarian Hitlerites even as he now served the Communists; and the leader of the prison interrogators, Dr. Martin Bodonyi, had worked for Nazi military tribunals under another name. The defense counsel assigned to the case had, however, been a member of the Communist Party since the days of Béla Kun.

Questions and answers succeeded each other much as they must have in the fearful prison. On the morning of February 8, 1949, the verdict was read:

"Joseph Mindszenty, the first accused, is sentenced herewith . . . to the cumulative penalty of penal servitude for life as the main penalty, to ten years' loss of office and ten years' suspension of political rights; further, the confiscation of all his property as supplementary punishment."

The charges against the Cardinal were circulated prior to the trial itself in an official *Yellow Book*, and the government subsequently issued a *Black Book* giving its version of the proceedings. The more carefully one reads these volumes, the greater one's astonishment is likely to be. We may discount in advance all the allegations which are known to have no foundation in fact. What is to be said of those which are probably true? A relatively minor charge is that certain sums of money obtained from abroad for Church purposes were not trans-

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793 695 687 ferred at the official rate. For these derelictions the Cardinal accepted full responsibility and offered to make restitution, though he personally could have had nothing to do with them. At best they would have merited a small fine levied against the Archiepiscopal treasury. The second charge, and no doubt the most important, was that prior to the signing of the treaty of peace the Cardinal had endeavored to win the support of the Western Powers. This he was clearly entitled to do, in the legal sense; and morally he was under the obligation to make every effort to maintain civil and religious rights as he understood them. It was true that he had clung desperately to his belief that the United States would not permit the Russians to acquire unilateral rule over Hungary—a hope he shared with millions of other Hungarian citizens, and indeed with foreigners of every creed and persuasion who happened to be in Hungary at that time. In declaring that such beliefs constituted conspiracy against the State, the Prosecutor argued and the Court upheld the view that desiring anything short of complete Russian control was incompatible with the Constitutional provision that full liberty of opinion, speech, and assembly was assured.

649 One special charge was that the Cardinal had indirectly approached American authorities handling restitution claims in order to urge that the Crown of St. Stephen be sent to the Vatican to be held in trust there. Here he was daring but still prudent. Undoubtedly he had very good reason to fear that the Crown, most illustrious symbol of Hungary's past, would be shipped to Russia as soon as it was returned to Budapest. His maneuver was certainly not complimentary to the Communists; but they were bound by the Occupation Statute and later by the treaty of peace, which went into effect on September 15, 1947. The Cardinal's correspondence concerning the Crown antedates the treaty. Yet even this obliges the Hungarian government to respect Article 2, which reads:

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1. Hungary shall take all measures necessary to secure to all persons under Hungarian jurisdiction, without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion, the enjoyment of human rights and of the fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, of press and publication, of religious worship, of political opinion, and of public meeting. C48 563

2. Hungary further undertakes that the laws in force in Hungary shall not, either in their content or in their application, discriminate or entail any discrimination between persons of Hungarian nationality on the ground of their race, sex, language, or religion, whether in reference to their persons, property, business, professional or financial interests, status, political or civil rights, or any other matter.

Never has a peace treaty contained fairer pledges. Unfortunately there exists no sanction against their violation save a rebuke before the forum of the United Nations. Such a rebuke was of course administered.

The charge which laid the Cardinal most seriously open to criticism was that as a Monarchist he had conspired to bring about a Restoration, had conferred with the Pretender to the Throne, and had relied upon American intervention to achieve his aims. The testimony on these matters presented at the trial and outlined in the *Black Book* is confused; nor did the Cardinal receive an opportunity to comment on the accusations in any adequate or sustained way. He admitted that he was a Legitimist, that he had hoped the Regency would be succeeded by a Monarchy, and that at the request of Otto of Habsburg he had conferred with him while visiting the United States during 1947. These things did not constitute conspiracy against the State, and would indeed be permissible within the framework of a relatively democratic society. Whether reestablishing the Monarchy was in any sense practicable, whether it was the form of government best suited to Hungary, and whether the population of the country would 793 695 687

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793 have voted in favor of a Restoration are, to be sure, matters
● 696 one could debate at length. But that discussion has no bearing
687 on the issue that the Cardinal had conspired to plunge the nation into civil war and thus impose a solution by force.

A number of able jurists of varied confessional and political points of view have carefully reviewed the trial procedures. There is none of repute in the free world who has not held that the trial was a farcical travesty of justice.*

793 And so the Cardinal, indefatigable leader of his Church
687 and of his people, entered through a narrow gate of infamy and pain the desert of penitential tribute to the power of iniquity. The ancient secret, that of the *mysterium iniquitatis*, the mystery of evil, was his to meditate upon even as hermits and martyrs, sages and great sufferers, the wise and the humble since the dawn of time had pondered it in times past. No doubt all he had to uproot from his heart were some vestiges of pride in his natural abilities and in his holy office—the pride he had sloughed off, surely, in the bitter days when he may well have asked the question which was on the lips of his Master, why God had forsaken him, and why he had been so grievously scourged for the sins of his time. They had humiliated him far beyond any boundaries which are set for humility to traverse. They had proved that theirs were the battalions and the torturers, the makers of decrees and the profiteers of power. The Archbishop of Esztergom, Prince of the Church and member of the Regent's Council, had become

693 * The trial of the Cardinal was directed by László Rajk, Minister of the Interior, who during September, 1949, was accused not only of having attempted to overthrow the Hungarian government and assassinate its principal officials but of espionage in behalf of the governments of the United States, Great Britain, and Yugoslavia. In short, Rajk was on trial for emulating Marshal Tito. Seven others were indicted as his accomplices. All were placed in confinement for some time previous to the convening of the Court. Testimony was introduced purporting to prove association with divers representatives of foreign powers. Nearly all of these have vehemently denied the allegations. Three death sentences were handed down and carried out. One victim was Rajk himself.